

A  
S E R M O N  
Preacht before the  
K I N G  
At Whitehall,  
November the XXX, 1673.

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By Roger Hayward, D. D. Chaplain in Ordinary  
to His M A J E S T Y.

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By His Majesties Special Command.

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L O N D O N,

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2 Epistle to the *Theſſalonians*, 2 Chap. 10, 11. Verſ.

*Because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved. For this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they may believe a Lye.*



Hough the words do relate to a Prophecy, yet I need not be ſo bold as to riſe into the doubtful contents of it, to find our the plain ſenſe of them; Whatſoever Age or Place of Chriſtendome this *dreadful Comet* foreſeen by the *Apoſtle* directly hung over, yet that it hath an evil Aſpect more or leſs upon all, is evident from the evil influence it hath every where ſcatter'd, and we are not free from, which is deſcrib'd in the words that I have read.

Wherein we have theſe two things conſiderable,

1. The ſad condition of ſome men, *God ſhall*

*send them strong delusion, that they may believe a lye.*

2. The reason of it; *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved*; And whatever offence the phrase of (*Gods sending*) may give us, as if *Darkness* could flow from him who is *Light*, the reason assign'd for it will easily remove.

What the strong delusion here threatn'd is, the verse before my Text tells us, *The coming of Sathan with powers, and signs and lying wonders*; such as *our blessed Saviour* foretold, with this accompt of them, *They would deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect*. Divers and deep have been the *μεθοδια πλάνης*, the methods of imposture in Religion; but the *δυσμα*, its *utmost effort*, and *choise master-piece* hath been, the counterfeiting those Credentials which God hath ever given to his immediate Messengers, *Power* and *Holiness*, it being contrary to his Perfections, and an invincible bar to all belief, for him to send a weak or wicked person on his extraordinary Errand; How far the first of these hath been forg'd, as by *Simon Magus* (the person suppos'd by some, to be primarily meant here) *Apollonius Tyanaus*, and others we are told by History; But the Devil hath long since, at least among us, laid by that old Engine, as being unfit to ensnare an inquisitive Age; But pretence of *Holiness* will never be outdated, the *Sheeps cloathing* will be a fresh and fashionable

Matth 24. 24.

Ephes. 4. 14.

Ephes. 4. 27.



fashionable disguise to the end of the world; yet neither of these *delusions* ever have been, or can be so *strong* or subtle as to elude all means of discovery: For though a *lying wonder* may by Mechanism or Conspiracy be so perform'd as to puzzle a very curious enquiry into the matter of fact only, and a *Sanctimonious vizard* may be so accurately made, as to startle an unwary admirer that gazes only on the outside of it; yet a careful search into the integrity, charity, and humility of *the person*, will certainly discover the forgery; counterfeit power and purity tast alwayes very strong of malice and pride.

But, thanks be to *God*, we cannot pretend the danger, nor plead the excuse of such temptations; such is the honest genius of *our Religion*, that it dazzles not our Eyes with any strange feats, nor deafs our Ears with unintelligible sounds, nor amuses our Minds with uncouth severities, nor offers any other Proofs for it self, then those its great Master hath left it, save only the strange success of them, against the will and interest of the greatest power and policy in the world. VVe are then safe from this first evil, unless we will be so humorous as to cheat our selves into the *belief of lyes*, which is the second part of their sad condition.

To rake up the ashes of *old Heretiques*, would be here as useles, as unsavory, and to rake into the wounds of *our own Church*, to seek the *Lye*, would be as barbarous; Some Balsom we rather take from  
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the words, for the healing of the sore of the Daughter of *Israel*, if it be not yet incurable ; viz, Every false Perswasion doth not amount to this *emphasis* of error, nor must we write on it the doom in my Text, lest we fall under our own condemnation : A small mistake may indeed, as 'tis menag'd, grow up to the dimensions of a *gross error*, let the vehicle be never so innocent, the ingredients make it a deadly poyson ; But a *lye* is an error which carries its contradiction in its face not at the end of a long chain of consequences hookt artificially together ; which is so thick and palpable, that not *Faith* and *Philosophy* onely, but even *Humanity* checks at it, as *being repugnant to that sense or testimony which is current through the whole world* ; And of this nature there are too many extant : I will not search into this or the other sect, or communion for them, onely lay down some general undeniable *Characters*, and whatsoever Doctrines or Propositions answer them, I hope 'twill be no rudeness or affront to leave the *lye* at their doors.

1. *Those that deny the being, or providence of God*, cannot justly be angry at that reproach, which they roundly put upon the whole world ; All men *Jews* and *Heathens*, yea their very *Idols* and *Altars*, and the *whole Creation*, do with one consent condemn these ; yea, so far do they contradict themselves, that they give the making and menagement of the whole world to such a blind

blind Power, which they dare not trust with the care of that little pittance of it they call their own ; And however sportive men may, in the transports of their pleasures, be with *God* ; yet this argues the denial of him to be the greatest falsity , that it needs so much confidence and wildness, and contempt of all things that are venerable amongst men, to support it. Again,

2. *Such Opinions as do violate his Perfections, or charge any thing that is evil on him*, that advance any Creature to his glories, or degrade him to its likeness, cannot escape this evil name : Those that of old invaded his honour, and gave it to others, are said by the *Prophet*, to hold a *lye* in their right hand ; and by the *Aposile*, to change the truth of *God* into a *lye*. And those that represent him as cruel or unjust, as peevish and easie to be provok'd, and yet easie to be flatter'd, are not the *Idea of the true God*, but the meer *Figments* and *Idols* of their own devising ; or whether their own Images which they set up in pomp, and then fall down and worship, Isa. 44. 20.  
Rom. 1. 23. Greg. Nazianz. *Evil* men, since they must have a *God*, will have the making of him , and then no doubt he shall be such an one as shall best serve their own purposes, a meer imaginary Creature of their own.

3. *Whatever destroys the evidence of sense in those things that fall properly under its cognizance, or the sufficiency of moral motives to induce a firm Faith*

*Faith in those things which do not, nor can't, falls justly under this censure: For greater assurance then these give us in their respective objects we cannot have; and upon this men adventure all that is dear to them, even their lives; and he that is so much Infidel to himself, as to disbelief his own sense, or to the whole world, as to refuse that security which is universally accepted amongst men, engages himself in invincible jealousies of all persons actions and things whatsoever; he may as well suspect the Food on his own Table, as adore that on Gods, and question any Record as well as that of the Bible; So fair do Scepticism and Infidelity bid for the Lye, that they cut off all the means, not of all faith in God only, but also in men; yea, of all knowledge and civil correspondence.*

Lastly, VVhatever errors *destroy a good life, and licentiate wickedness*, such for instance, as confound the difference of Good and Evil, that dispense with subjection, truth, honesty and mercy, and the inseparable duties of Relations; that decry the necessity of good works, that establisheth a Religion void of Virtue, a Faith without Obedience, Repentance without Amendment; all which do not by a perplext course of consequences, but by a direct force set up Iniquity as by a Law: The *common sense* of Mankind (the universal Conscience) is the most safe and steady ark and repository of Truth, firmer then *Seths* Pillars, or the two Tables, which can  
never

never moulder away, in which all the virtues of a good life are so deeply ingrav'd, that they are not to be eras'd without the violation of it; *Truth* and *Justice*, *Charity* and *Sobriety*, are older then the Laws of the Sons of *Noah*, and more durable then Mount *Sinai*; they are *the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*; the *Data* of all Laws, the bonds of all Societies, the hallowed soyl all *Religions* have been built on, of which that is the best, that is most exactly fram'd to *them*; all men approve and defend these as their common Birth-right, their κοινὸν ἄγαθόν, and are ready joyntly to prescribe him as a common enemy, that assaults *them*; The grosseness of any Error is not in the little remote absurdities that Art may urge it with, (God forbid that the misnaming or misplacing the terms in a Syllogism should be damnable!) but in the immediate mischievous effects of it; if the next streams be deadly, we may conclude the fountain to be poysonous, and whatsoever Doctrine authorizes evil, we may boldly pronounce it to be a *Lye*; A name so hateful for the relation it bears to the Devil, that I dare not affix it to any errors, but such as stand anathematiz'd for such by the truest œcumenical council, even the common consent of the whole world.

John 8. 44.

And now it may be wondered how in so nice and squeamish an Age, such tough and unfavoury Untruths should be so greedily swallow'd; and I might be thought (were not such concepts too no-

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toriously own'd) to have devis'd some Monsters to make sport with ; how men whose understandings serve them well as to other things, should yet be so stupid as to deny him that made them, or to make him such an one as they please, or to turn Infidels to themselves and all men, or lastly, to think real virtue, upon which their own & all other mens comfort and security depend, to be but an old Heathen notion, a Levitical shadow, as very a trifle in Gods accompt, as in their own ; This may seem strange, but the wonder will soon be over, if we will consider the second part of the Text,

The reason of this sad doom, *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

A sad charge, as heavy as the doom ! That it imports more than bare Infidelity, is plain from the words, which signifie,

1. An unworthy reception of truth ; they received not *the love* of it.

2. The defeating the design of it ; were not *saved* by it.

There are too many that receive the *Doctrines and Promises of a holy Life* (for that is the specifical sense of *truth* in the *holy Scripture*) with scorn and contempt, who, disdaining the sneaking guilt of the triflers in my Text, aspire to that of Blasphemers of *Truth*, for whom therefore a more dreadful judgment than that here (if any can be so)



is of old appointed, *Because you have set at naught all my Counsel, I also will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh.* Others receive it with more civility, with an agreeable countenance and behaviour, but a cold indifferency, as they would a stranger; and if its approach, dress Language, or arguing chance to please them, their civility may improve to that gladness that *Herod* afforded the *Baptist*, and 'tis a welcome Guest for an hour. Prov. 1. 20. &c. Mark 6. 20.

A third sort receive it with a zealous fondness, with Passions and Raptures, yet not it, but the phrase, the tone, the action that conveys it; For let the same truth be read in a Lesson, in a lower key, and with a more compos'd behaviour, and it looses its warm entertainment.

And what is all this but flattery and falsehood? It may be the love of something that is agreeable to the Ears, as sweet Accents or smooth Periods are, let the matter be serious or frivolous; or to the Fancy, as such discourses as sooth mens particular tempers, whether they are true or false; or to the Understanding, as a well-fram'd Hypothesis of the motions of the Planets; But all this, even the *clearest notion of truth* falls short of the *love of it*; This admits it beyond all the chambers of imagination and discourse, into the treasures the affections of the Soul, seats it there in full power, casts out whatsoever is distastful to it, and subjects all

things, even its dearest inclinations to its Laws; and whatsoever is short of this, is but being slightly pleas'd or instructed by it, *not saved*: which is the second part of their charge.

That men look upon *Salvation*, as a bare Reverfion, which hath nothing of duty or happinefs in it on this fide the Grave, as it argues a ftrong love of their Sins, fo it doth a grofs ignorance of the design of the *Goffel*, the onely effect of which, that fhould or can be expected from it here (as it every where declares) is, *that it fave us from our fins*, without which the ftrongeft hopes of Heaven are but the Dreams of a Fools Paradife; If therefore men will not be better'd by it, if notwithstanding its plainest Precepts, higheft Promises, and moft frightful Terrors, if in defiance to the ftrongeft motives, the *Blood of Jesus* and the *Bowels of God*, to invite them, and all the *Aids of Heaven* tender'd to affist them, and all the treasures of Love and Vengeance laid open to perfwade them, they will continue in their wickednefs, and *not be faved*, with whatsoever solemnity they receive, they do effectually but reject and baffle *the truth*.

This is their Charge, *Holding the truth of God in unrighteousnefs*, or (as in the next verfe to the Text 'tis phras'd) *not believing in the truth, but having pleasure in unrighteousnefs*, as if that pleasure were flat without the refiftance of *Truth* to keen the appetite, as if the wayes to death were not plain

Tit. 2. 11,  
12.

Rom. 1. 18.

plain enough without the *light of the Gospel* to direct them thither, and 'twere a glorious conquest through all the forces of *Light and Love, Mercy and Vengeance*, to do violence to the *Kingdom of Darkness*, and storm Hell and Damnation.

This is the Charge, and how it fits men for this doom, and prepares them for the *grossest errors* I am next to shew.

The clearest Principles of *Faith and Reason* are not so convincing as the *Doctrines of a holy life*, which, as the light, bring their own evidence with them, and approve themselves at first sight to be *holy, just and good*; And the *grossest errors* cannot be press'd with such palpable absurdities, as any *great and wilful wickedness*, which the conscience confutes, not by formal argument, but with pain and shame and confusion of face, and leaves it no evasion, or defence but that which amounts to a denial, extenuation: He therefore that is grown so hardy as to resist the strongest convictions of his own conscience, and to baffle the painful conflicts of his own spirit, who can hear and feel, and despise his own condemnation, how easie a conquest will he make over the weaker persuasions of his mind? The strongest sense we have implanted by Nature, or renew'd by Grace in our Souls, is, That of *Good and Evil*, which, because 'tis the Guardian of our Innocence and Safety, therefore hath God made it so quick and apprehensive, The sense of

*True*

*True and False* is much more weak and languid, like the last faint returns of a dying eccho; If *that* therefore be grown stupid, how can *this* continue in its vigour? When once a man is grown so senseless as to lay by all reverence and pitty of himself, and to endure his own torments and reproaches, he may easily despise the weaker chastisements of the sharpest demonstrations. Besides, there is *no great sin* but is attended with some proper mischiefs which touch the evil man in those parts wherein he is far more sensible and tender, then in any the faculties of his Soul, with which either his Body, or his Credit, or his Substance are *weary and heavy laden*; And can we think the *Articles* of such a mans Faith can be dearer to him then his *Health*, his *Honour*, or his *Estate*, which he so readily sacrifices to his Sins? or, That a contradiction should trouble his mind, who hath no compassion left for these? Can the harshest discords give any offence to those Ears that have been run'd onely to cursing and calumny? or the most ill-shapt unproportion'd objects to those Eyes that have delighted in the ugliest deformities of their own natures? No more offence can the most inconsistent untruths give him, *who being past feeling, hath given himself over to work all uncleanness with greediness*. Thus doth wickedness harden and enure the mind for the grossest errors: and the more,

Ephes. 4. 19.

2. Because it exposes a man to all *temptations*, and makes him a ready prey for any belief that comes arm'd with the same weapons, he hath been so often worsted with; If Pleasure, Honour, and Profit can make a man a Beast, a Villain or a Knave, they may as easily, where they stand for it, make him an Infidel or Apostate; If the smiles of a friend can strip a man of his *Humanity*, they will shake his *Creed*, which sits not so close to him; [He who abandons his *Innocency* for a little Railery, would sure be quickly storm'd out of his *Faith*;

But what speak I of temptation? He that persists in his wickedness in defiance to truth needs no *Tempter*, being of himself propense to invent, or imbrace the *grossest lies*. For,

3. There are two great depths of darkness, whence all those Mists that be-night mens Understandings do arise, an *evil conscience* and *evil affections*; both which have their rise and growth from an *evil life*, and do beguile men with a subtler sophistry, then all outward imposture, which borrows all its force from them.

1. *The evil Conscience works thus*. To the native delicate Sense of the Soul the evil of guilt is very afflictive; The remembrances of Blood, Rapine, Oppression, Cozenage, and the like, are not onely frightful sights, but cruel furies to a man; Something then must be done for his ease, he cannot live on this wheel, nor lie down with this fire  
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in his bosome, nor can he shift off these Tortures that stick as close to him as the knowledge of himself does; The common diversions of noise, jollity, and business will not alwayes last, he must sometimes be alone, and then the Tormenters return; Thus like the evil Spirit in the Gospel, *He goes about seeking rest, and can find none*; The onely sure and Catholick Remedy of *Repentance from dead works*, (which by the *Blood of Jesus*, and the *Promise of the Spirit*, we are assur'd will be successful) is harsh and severe, and requires *cutting off the gangrend Hand, and pulling out the enflam'd Eye*, and other rigours he can no more endure then the distemper; 'tis a long and heavy way to the City of Refuge, and when one is there 'tis but an imprisonment. In this distress some Witchcraft must be sought to, some easier arts found out to palliate the evil, and assuage the pain. And for this he hath heard much talk of a goodly and cheap *Robe of Righteousness*, and a choice fucus of *Faith*, with which he may so cover and beautifie the monsters, that the all-seeing Eye of the *most holy God* shall not see sin in them; In this disguise he presently puts them, and having thus conceal'd them, he apprehends no terror in them; Thus thousands swallow *this enthusiastick lye*, for indeed 'tis very delicious, and gives a great deal of ease to the vilest Sinner, without the least trouble or disturbance to his Sin.

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But if the man be frighted out of this phancy into a thoughtful mood, and being arrested with the sense of God, sees his nakedness through these Figleaves, and feels that for all his finery he is yet in pain, and something must be done besides this *mummery* for his ease, he next casts about for what is easie, not sure; And being told, that a slight exposing the evil, by a short confession, a very little attrition, and a round satisfaction to the Church, by the help of a few omnipotent words, and in the close of all, a little healing unction, will infallibly effect the cure, and lay these terrors; Having so *venerable authority* for it, he takes the opiate, which lulls him into a pleasant *slumber and giddiness*; and now he cries, *Soul, take thy ease*, and lust, take thy liberty, and whensoever the terrors do return, 'tis but repeating the remedy, *Toties, quoties*, and all will be well; But if the charge of this (as the cheapness of the other) render it suspicious, if reason do awaken the man, and persuade him that *God* cannot be imposed upon by such thin devices; and after all his vain trials, he finds 'tis not possible by these poor crafts to reconcile *the sense of his God and his Guilt*, so as they may peaceably abide together; Having first resolv'd to live and die in his dear wickedness, he then sees it's necessary wholly to discharge his mind of the first great troubler of his rest, as that which he is most desirous, and will cost him least to part with: And

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when he hath well *exorcis'd* the sense of *God*, and sinn'd himself into the hope that he is not, he applauds himself in that ease and freedome that he hath forc't and abus'd his Soul into.

That this is the usual method Guilt puts men upon for a little temporary ease, is a plain and frequent observation; It sets out at *Enthusiasm*, and ends in *Atheism*, betwixt which how distant soever they seem, there is but one short stage, *viz. Superstition*: Thus the grossest Lyes become a needful Sanctuary, *when Hymæneus and Alexander put away their Conscience, they were forc't to send their Faith after it*, which would have been very uneasie to them without it; Thus when men have spent their Innocence in riotous courses, they must (*as the Prodigal in the Gospel*) set up some sordid way of living, *serve Swine and dyet with them*, to subsist.

2. The other things that so corrupt the mind, as to make it greedy of the *grossest Lyes*, are *evil affections*, which cannot be maintain'd nor gratifi'd without them. So are we fram'd that there is little *dry light* in us, our apprehensions are deeply tinctur'd, if not form'd by our affections; *We believe with the heart*, is as true in *Philosophy* as 'tis in *Scripture*, for mens' most unconcerning speculations favour something of the love or reverence wherewith they imbib'd them, how much more their moral and religious perswasions? when once therefore the *affections* of men are by their *evil practices*

1 Tim. I. 19,  
20.

*practices* turn'd into brutish, or diabolical, they change all things, their Gods, Religions, Creeds, Commandments, Heaven and Hell into their own complexions; How exactly did the *Idols* of the *Heathen* suit with their tempers, and the notions too many Christians have of *their God*, with their own deprav'd dispositions? How agreeable to a cruel and savage mind is the *Mahumetan zeal*, and their *Paradise* to the Intemperate and Unclean? How proper is the temporal reign of *their King Jesus* to the revengeful and ambitious? How greedily do they suck in the breath that declaims against good works who are griping and niggardly? How welcome are the new wayes of Salvation by *phancy* or *proxy* to the delicate and lazy? How tastful is the Doctrine against Spirits to a mind that is carnaliz'd? and the news of *no God* to those who *would have none of his Laws*? Men fix their *belief* where they place their *happiness*, and a little perswasion will serve to rid their thoughts of that which obstructs their passage to it; Soon did the *Indian* renounce his *Baptism*, when he found it obliged him to renounce his dearer *Paganism*; But whatsoever story sooths and cherishes their lusts, that first swells their wishes into hopes, their hopes into possibilities, and these into lusty demonstrations that it is true; For this reason the *Apostle St. James* requires us to *lay aside all filthyness, and superfluity of* Jam. 1. 21. *naughtiness, before we can receive the engrafted*  
C 2 word;

word; And 'twas not by prophecy but experience  
 2 Tim. 3. 4. the Apostle *St. Paul* said, *That men would heap up  
 Teachers according to their lusts*; the same experi-  
 ence that taught the Philosopher that *ἡδοναὶ εἰσὶν ἀρχαῖον  
 φθαρτικόν*, pleasures corrupt mens principles; for  
 according to his rule, all things are nourisht by  
 what they are made, the food must be agreeable to  
 the faculty, and mens evil lusts must pine and  
 starve, if they have nothing but the *ἡδονὰν γάλα*. *bo-  
 nest truth* to be maintained by; Thus through the  
 1 Pet. 2. 2. eager appetite of these men become not only recep-  
 tive of, but ravenous after the foulest trash, the  
*grossest lyes*.

And now this plain accompt hath saved me la-  
 bour of Justifying our most Righteous and Good  
 God in this sad doom wherein 'tis said, *God sends  
 men, &c.*

The great concernment that ~~he~~ owns, and must  
 (as he is God) necessarily have in all the affairs  
 of the world, gives men occasion to *lay all their  
 burthens* upon him in the worst sense, that is, if  
 they are blind, wicked, and unhappy, they cry out  
 presently (as he in the Tragedy) against, *Ζεὺς ὦ μοῖρα*;  
 yea, they cannot be sloathful and poor, but anon  
*Providence* must be impleaded; For if they have  
 once got an unavoidable necessity, they are sure  
 they have a good apology.

That *God* doth by any positive act blind, or in-  
 fatuate men, as it is utterly repugnant to his Per-  
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fections, who is *Light* and *Love*; So 'tis a foul Blasphemy that hath no colour for it, but what some mens expounding *Scripture* and *Providence* in the sense of their own evil nature gives it; But if he permit imposture for the trial of our reason, as he doth temptation for our integrity, where is the cruelty? And if he suspend his *Light*, when men as the *Sodomites* would commit outrages by it, where is the wrong? If he remove his *truth* from them that resist it, where is the violence? To obtrude it where men withstand it, that were *violence* indeed; Though he be a *God full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great goodness*, yet he is not bound under any necessity of exposing his *Truth* and his *Goodness* for ever to the scorn and contempt of ingrateful and dirty Worms, and 'tis a mad and disingenuous temptation of him to try by our obstinacy how long he can forbear; His *Truth* shall not alwayes contend in vain, *if men will close their Eyes, and harden their Hearts*, it shall happen to them according to their own choice, as to the *Jews* of old, *seeing they shall not see, hearing they shall not understand*. God doth then no more in this, then in all other his Judgments, *fill the evil man with his own devices*. He delighted in darkness, and 'tis given him for a portion, and a sad one 'tis, an entrance into *the outer darkness*, and wants onely *weeping and gnashing of teeth*, the dolorous and madding sense of it, to complete it.

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Matth. 13.  
13, 14, 15-

He then knits the bands of his destiny, his sentence is not more severe to him, than his own choice, *Because he received not the love of the truth, therefore he is given over to the belief of lyes.*

From what hath been said of this, I shall raise three Conclusions.

1. *Nothing so directly endangers our Faith, as an evil Life*; It cannot indeed be expected that they should have any hearty love for their *Faith*, that have none for their *Souls*; For (however some look on it as no more then one of the *peculiarities* of the Nation they live in, as their Language, their Habit, their Laws and Customs are, yet) we know the great design of it is, to instruct and encourage us in those things that may make us *good and happy for ever*, and he that lists not to be so, cannot be a true Friend to that Faith which should make him so. Yet we see that Education, Custom, Interest and Præ-ingagement, implant even in the worst of men a very tenacious reverence of their Belief; but I hope we value ours upon stronger motives; which though it be besides the design of my Text to recompt, yet (that I be not too impudent a Beggar of the Question) the *Characters* I have given of *gross and damnable errors* will acquit it of the imputation of any such; Search and try if there be any thing in it, that tends to the *denial of God, the diminution of his Glory, the countenance of Infidelity, or a bad Life*, Then let it suffer in our esteem;  
But



But if it be so tender of *Gods honour*, that it won't venture to parcel it out to others upon the warranty of any critical distinction, if it be so fair and ingenuous as not to impose upon our understandings and senses, but subjects it self to the closest sober enquiries; if it have so much esteem for *true Goodness*, as to prefer it before all outward Ritualities, and set it above the dispensations of any Interests or Powers whatsoever, I hope it may find excuse, with all those that are true *Lovers of God, Reason and Virtue*; But the great fault of our *Faith* and the sum of all those particulars 'tis charg'd with, is, that it is too stubborn and nice, and will not be commanded nor entreated beyond that *Rule*, which the *great Author of it* hath left us, and sure this should not be its reproach but commendation to those whose *great glory* it is to have transmitted the *Holy Scripture* to us; if it offend in this, 'tis certainly on the safer side of a great modesty, and an humble deference to our *blessed Saviour and his holy Apostles*. Such an account of it as this, But from *his Royal lips*, who spoke, and writ, and liv'd; and dy'd best for it, (next to the *holy Jesus* and his immediate *Witnesses*) render'd it so acceptable to a profess'd Enemy of it (*Padre Roboese* By the Earl of Monmouth in the History of the Civil Wars of Aca Confessor to the *Infanta*, as the story is well known and voucht) that he turn'd its *Confessor*, in this honest acknowledgment; *If this be your Faith, for ought I know, you may be sav'd as well as I.*

But

ph. 4. 14.

But (to return to my *Text*) whatever accompt hath endear'd it to us, nothing so much hazards it, as a *Pagan* life and conversation; There are two things men are commonly very fearful of in this case, The weakness of their own Understanding, and the wiliness and cunning craftiness of those that lye in wait to deceive; As for the first, however faulty simplicity, may be in other things, we have no great cause to apprehend it so here; Yea, the itch of *Knowledge* which drew man into the first fatal *Error*, hath still continued to have the same evil influence; whilst men are contented with that measure of knowledge, which is fit for them, and answers the offices and necessities of their Lives, they are safe within these bounds; But when they begin *ὑπερβουλεύειν*, to soar above *St. Johns Epistles* to his *Revelations*, and leave *Charity* to expound *Mysteries*, disclose *Prophecies*, and model *Politics*, they enter into Clouds and Darkness, and no wonder if they stray, *Gnostick* is the true name of every *Heretique*; Nor is the craftiness of *Deceivers* so dreadful as men make it, For besides that, the truly good man is seldom so idle or curious as to hearken to their Charms, so his beloved Principles of *humility*, *peacefulness*, and *submission* make him abhorrent of them; yea, there is an awfulness in *goodness* that checks their boldest solicitations, but wickedness doth invite them, as the luxurious Prodigal, the Cheats; and though  
their

their *good Words and fair Speeches may lead cap-* Rom. 16. 18.  
*tive silly Women*, yet, 'tis only such as *are laden* 2 Tim 3. 6.  
*with Sins and led away with divers Lusts*; Let us  
 not then impute that danger to *these* that is onely  
 due to *wickedness of life*, those do but assault the  
 out-works, this strikes at the vitals of our *Faith*,  
 and creates those strong prejudices to it, which,  
 were they not aw'd by some outward regards,  
 would soon break out into open Hostility; A *sound*  
*Faith* and a *corrupt Life* may be found together,  
 there are too many such monsters as *Orthodox*  
*Reprobates*, men that *hold the truth of God*  
*in unrighteousness*; but this they wholly owe to the  
 restraints of the *Divine Providence*, not to any in-  
 ward friendship that maintains the union:  
 "Didst not thou *oh mighty God who rulest the ra-*  
 " *ging of the Sea*, didst not thou likewise stop some  
 " mens *Principles* from running out into their *pro-*  
 " *per practices*, and other mens *practices* from set-  
 " ling in their *proper Principles*, what a deluge  
 " of *Infidelity and Barbarism* would soon overflow  
 " thy *poor Church*; Yet by whatever outward  
 bond mens *Faith* is ty'd to them, if it be not *in-*  
*grafted* in their Hearts and Lives, it hangs but  
 loose, and lies at the mercy of any Engine to re-  
 move it that hath as much force, as that which up-  
 holds it; and let such ever bless God that they  
 were born under a *most Gracious Defender of their*  
*Faith*. God forbid we should ever again be fool'd

D

with

COR. II. 2.

with the old shooes and the mouldy bread of the Gibeonites, to create or foment any *publick jealousies*, the Language of which (we too sadly know) when they speak out is nothing but, *Arm, Arm*; yet there is a *godly jealousy* the *Apostle* speaks of which we all ought to have of our selves, which would call down our eyes from a busie prying into aspects of the *heavenly bodies* to behold the fatal Prognosticks in our selves, which if we did consider, would awaken such apprehensions as these in us; “How have we seen *Truth* approaching us with all “the powers of *reason, sweetness, and terror*? with “all kind of *demonstrations*, but the miraculous “ones of the *spirit*, and in lieu of them, with the “confirm’d experience of sixteen hundred years? “But what reception, what success hath it found? “Let shame and sorrow answer! If it hath escaped “our *scorn* we have been very merciful to it, and “a *cold patience* hath been a high favour; and now how indifferent must we needs be for that which we have treated so unworthily? How easily may the subtilty of wit, or the caresses of friendship, persuade us from that which hath been our continual burthen, which we have and do *actually* renounce?

2. *The best expedient for the defence of Truth, and preventing the growth of gross Errors, is, the enforcement of a good life by the precepts and practice of it.* How vain and fruitless have *Dispute* and  
Con-

*Controversie* been? how few *Converts* have they made? and 'tis no wonder, there is a veil lies upon mens minds which must not be rudely rent, but remov'd with a gentle hand; There is a *Lasum organum* in the case, *The God of this world bath blinded their minds*, to the cure of which we must first apply, for all the treasures of *light* open'd upon a sore eye will but more offend it; mens *understandings* are not to be immediately attacqu'd, nor carried by storm, the more they are press'd, the more they resist; they lie deeply intrencht in the *affections*, and are never to be gain'd but by those *fair representations* and *powerful applications of goodness*, that may win these. Though the *holy Jesus* spake so as never man spoke, and did those *migbty things* that none else could do; Yet had not his Lips been as full of *Grace* as they were of *Truth*, and his Works of *Benignity* as they were of *Power*, he might have astonisht many, he had never proselyted any to him; The *Primitive* methods of convincing were by *letting their light so shine before men, that they might see their good works*, and by *well-doing they did that*, (which we find nothing else can do) *they put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*; and we cannot imagine how any other wayes the τὰ μὲν ὄντα, *the things which were nothing* in the worlds accompt should have brought to nought the greatest, and the foolish and weak have confounded the wise and the mighty: Yea,

2 Cor. 4. 4.

Matth. 5. 16.

1 Pet. 2. 15.

1 Cor. 1. 27.

28.

this is the method of all *Imposture* and *Temptation*,  
 Cor. II. 13. they transform themselves into the appearance of  
*goodness*, and thus the Serpent winds himself  
 there, where the teeth of the Lion could not en-  
 ter, Let us use some of the *Viper* in our Antidote,  
 for *Truth* and *Error*, *Life* and *Death*, make their  
 entry the same way; Whilst railing confutes its  
 own best reasoning, and the keenness of the argu-  
 ment blunts it, and the curiosities of art makes  
 it suspected, and all the wayes of wit and  
 anger are unsuccessful, then *goodness* insinuates it  
 self, and melts down the iron finew and the brow of  
 brags; For 'tis most certain, παντὶ λόγῳ ἀντικειται λόγος,  
 nothing can be so spoken, but it may be spoken  
 against; but however men may put by the strokes  
 of the *strongest reasoning*, yet they cannot resist  
 the charms of *Charity*, *Purity*, *Meekness* and *Hu-*  
*mility*, and *Goodness* and *Truth* are so everlastingly  
 allied, that where men meet with the one, they  
 certainly expect the other; *Which of you con-*  
*vinceth me of sin?* was such a challenge as the  
 Jews could not answer to our Saviour; and, *if I say*  
 Joh. 8. 45. *the truth, why do you not believe me?* was such an  
 Assumption as they could not object against; A  
*good life* therefore is the plainest and highest com-  
 mendation of, and would gain more Profelytes to  
 our most holy *Faith*, then all our Pleas and Apolo-  
 gies for it; Were we but as good as our *Religion*  
 is, and would have us be, our Enemies would  
 flow



flow into our *Church*, and we should not need any, either Comprehensive Arts, or Colledges, *propaganda fide*, to bring the fam'd argument of *universality* on our side. Yet should this method prove unsuccessful to others, it would return to our own profit, which is the

Last conclusion; *An honest Obedience to the truths that are (universally received,) or a good life (which never yet came into controversie) is the best security we can have from all dangerous and damnable Errors*; To be secure from these, is, I doubt not, the desire, study and enquiry of all, but 'tis too usual for men to find a *Dungeon* where they look't for a *Sanctuary*.

Some fly to a *Spirit* they have heard much talk of, which without any thoughts of their own, or the weak helps of *Heathen Philosophy*, *Carnal Reason*, or *Spiritual Guides*, will by an immediate hand direct them, and when their fancies are well impregnate with this pleasant conceipt, lay by all further care of themselves, commit their minds to the strange impulses of it, not doubting, but under its conduct *they shall be led into all truth*.

And so, no doubt they would, were it the sweet and calm *spirit* of *holiness* and *sobriety*, of a peaceable and *good life*; But if we expect *this* any other way, then in the diligent use of our faculties, we  
may

may wait as long for it as the *Jews* for their *Messias*. Are all *Prophets*? are all *Apostles*? are all *Evan-  
gelists* that they dream of *Inspiration*? Moreover,  
 Joh. 4. 1. *no Spirit is to be believed without due tryal*,  
 and that furious *Spirit* which hath so haunted  
 the World, and would turn all things upside  
 down, betrays its self, by its fruits, to be of an  
 evil kind; its *fierceness* and *violence* plainly speak  
 it to be of kin to that in the Gospel, *That threw*  
 Mat. 17. 15 *the poor man into the fire and water*; 'Tis no more,  
 in short, then the force of mens own black and  
 impetuous *Lusts*, which by their *strength* they  
 take for some *omnipotent thing*, and so suffer them-  
 selves to be hurried by it into all the Labyrinths of  
 Darkness.

By whose misfortunes others grown more  
 sober and wary, retire to their own reasonings,  
 where having fortifi'd themselves with *good sense*,  
 and *great suspicion*, they think they are safe from  
 the assaults of *gross lyes*.

And so they were, were they not false to  
 themselves, by leaving some weak and indefensi-  
 ble places where the enemy may easily enter; For  
*such as the man is such is his reasoning*, if he be soft  
 and voluptuous, smooth and sensual, errors may  
 surprise him; if cruel and revengeful, any bloody  
 and fiery Doctrines will take him; and how safe  
 soever the *man of argument* thinks himself in  
 it,

it, yet if he can live in a *sin* against which he can argue as well as any of those whose trade it is, why may he not, on the same enducements, admit an error which he can as well confute? Thus men of the greatest parts and improvements have espous'd the greatest Errors, *pretending themselves to be wise, they become fools.* Which whilst others observe, grown more fearful and modest by their fall; they think it safest to trust themselves with some *wise guide*, and having heard of one thats *infallible*, they cheerfully resign their understandings to his keeping, and then they are safe. Rom. 1. 2

And so surely they are, if it be but so; But first, they must be *infallibly* assur'd of his *infallibility*, else they have nothing mended their condition; For, if the proof of this admits of the least doubt (as the difference of those that own it, where they should fix it, doth confess) if they have not an *unquestionable evidence* of the unfailing integrity and wisdom of him they have intrusted with so great a treasure as their Faith and their Souls, Then, instead of *wisely ensuring*, they may (for ought they know) onely have *tamely enslav'd* them; And a shrewd suspicion there is that it is so, in that, men must extinguish the *Lamp of God* in them, for their safer guidance, and to secure their *Faith*, must abandon their *Reason* and *Sense*, of which there can be no use nor need to him

him who is held by an *infallible band*, and cannot be misguided.

But sure the world hath had proof enough of the danger of such *Guardians* of their *Faith*, and 'tis to be hoped when men have run through all these mazes, and are grown giddy and tir'd therein, they will be perswaded to repose themselves (*whither all men fly at their last distress*) under the better security of a *good life*; Not, that this excludes *thoughtfulness* or *devotion*, or supercedes the necessity of *Church Doctrine* or *Discipline*, for the honest use of those, and a modest teachable submission to these are great parts of a *good life*; But it calms the *Passions*, purges the *Affections*, tunes the instruments of *Reason*, and eases the Soul of all inward Disorders; And that this is the best preparation even for *Sæcular Wisdom*, all men do own, in that none go reeking in *Lust*, wallowing in *Riot*, flaming in *Passion*, to any serious study, *Council* or *Action*; they take their most virtuous moods for those, and do appear the *best men* and *Christians* when they would shew themselves the best *Philosophers* and *Counsellors*; But a *good life* doth more than this to the preserving us from *deadly Errors*, for it begets in us a quick sense of whatsoever is contrary to its self, as all *such Errors* still are; and though the good mans *art* may fail him in small mistakes, yet his continual *exercise of goodness* (as

(as the experience of every Artist in his Trade, and the naturate sagacity of every Creature in what is good or evil to it) makes him very apprehensive of what is very false and dangerous.

But its greatest safety is in this, that it entitles us to *Gods* especial care and guidance; who though he had not told us so often as he hath, *That the meek* Gal. 25. 9.  
*he will guide in judgment, and teach his wayes. If*  
*ye continue in my words, ye shall know the Truth:* Joh. 8. 31 32.  
*He that heareth my words, and doth them, is founded* Matth. 7. 25.  
*upon a Rock;* yet (if our thoughts be not very unworthy of him) we shall not dare to suspect, that he will ever abandon a true *Lover* and *Doer* of his Will, who desires nothing but to be conform'd to himself by it, to be bewildred and benighted in the *errors of the wicked* that lead to death; The jealousy of such a sportive cruelty, we should abhor to have of any worthy Friend or Master, and 'tis beyond all expressions, base and unreasonable of him who is *Light* and *Love*; Who, should he forsake a Soul wholly devoted to his *Laws*, to wander and be misguided to its ruine, must forget, not only his *Promises*, but his very *Nature*, his *Truth* and *Goodness*; and if once we call these into doubt, we sink into *bottomless Scepticism*, where we shall not find any surer footing for the certainty of our *Senses* then of our *Faith*; The same foundations then that *Heaven* and *Earth* are built upon, the same is every

E good

*good mans Faith, yea Heaven and Earth may pass away, but the goodnes of the Lord endureth for ever ; Here therefore is the most firm and Chatholick security that God hath provided for men of all capacities, whereby the meanest Reasoner, whose head akes at a hard argument, is as safe, if he be but as honest and good, as the Scribe or the Disputer, or the man that is mighty at demonstration ; Let us therefore, as the Apostle St. Peter advises us, commit the keeping of our Souls to God in weldoing, as unto a faithful Creatour ; and pray ever as our Apostle hath taught us in the end of this Chapter ; Now our Lord Jesus Christ, and God even our Father, who bath loved us, and given us this everlasting consolation, and good hope, comfort our hearts and stablsh us in every good Word and Work, to whom be all glory given world without end. Amen.*

## ERRATA.

Page 5. line 19. for *their* read *men*; 20. for *whereby* read *rather*; p. 6. l. 1. for *cast* read *cast*; *disbelieves* read *disbeliever*; p. 7. l. 12. for *prescribe* read *prescribe*; p. 18. l. 4. read *27*; 11. after *These*, p. 24. l. 7. read *the* before *appears*; p. 28. l. 12. read *in* for *them*; p. 31. l. 2. for *read* read *natural*.

**F I N I S.**



Gedderas

Ex dono Anthorvi